

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02  
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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS KUWAIT 1521

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PFOR, KU  
SUBJECT: KUWAITI REACTION TO BREZHNEV REMARKS ON MIDDLE EAST

1. SUMMARY. THE TWO KUWAITI OFFICIALS WHO HAVE REACTED PUBLICLY TO BREZHNEV'S MARCH 21 SPEECH HAVE REFLECTED DIS-APPOINTMENT, BUT THE LOCAL PRESS HAS BEEN MORE NEGATIVE, GENERALLY CHARACTERIZING THE SOVIET POSITION AS SIMILAR TO AND JUST AS OBJECTIONABLE AS THAT OF THE US. END SUMMARY.

2. LEONID BREZHNEV'S REMARKS MARCH 21 REGARDING MIDDLE EAST PEACE, DELIVERED TO CONGRESS OF SOVIET TRADE UNIONS, REPORTEDLY ELICITED FOLLOWING RESPONSES TO NEWSMEN BY KUWAITI MINISTER FOR CABINET AFFAIRS ABDUL-AZIZ HUSSEIN AND KUWAITI MFA UNDERSEC RASHID AL-RASHID. AL ANBA OF MARCH 23 REPORTS HUSSEIN AS SAYING THAT THE SOVIET UNION'S POSITION IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE TRADITIONALLY HAS BEEN CLOSER TO THAT OF THE ARABS THAN HAS THE US POSITION, BUT NOTING THAT BOTH SUPERPOWERS  
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RECOGNIZE ISRAELI "EXISTENCE." HUSSEIN LAMENTED THAT, JUST AS THE ARABS HAVE FAILED "IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATION INSIDE THE USA" (TO CHANGE US POLICY), THEY HAVE FAILED TO ESTABLISH MEANINGFUL (MAWDU'TYAH) RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. THUS, BREZHNEV'S REMARKS WERE "CONSISTENT WITH SOVIET POLICY" AND SOVIET VIEWS OF MIDDLE EAST ISSUES. EVEN SO, CONCLUDED HUSSEIN, THE ATTITUDE OF THE USSR IS "RATHER MORE POSITIVE

THAN THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE", TAKING HISTORY INTO ACCOUNT. ON MARCH 23, UNDERSEC AL-RASHID IS REPORTED BY AL RAI AL AM AS HAVING REMARKED (ABOUT BREZHNEV'S SPEECH) THAT "WE DO NOT CARE ABOUT ANY STATEMENT WHICH WOULD NOT ENSURE THE RETURN OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO THEIR HOMES," AND AL-SIYASAH REPORTED THAT AL-RASHID SAID KUWAITIS WERE "WAITING FOR THE ARAB AND WORLD REACTION" TO BREZHNEV'S REMARKS, IMPLYING THAT KUWAITI VIEW WOULD ACCORD WITH THAT OF THE "PALESTINIAN PEOPLE."

3. UNIFORMLY NEGATIVE PRESS REACTION. THE DAY AFTER BREZHNEV'S PRONOUNCEMENTS, SEVERAL KUWAITI NEWSPAPER HEADLINED THEM: ONE CALLED THEM AN "AMERICAN SPEECH," ASSERTING SIMILARITY TO RECENT USG STATEMENTS. ALSO, MOST EDITORIALS HAVE LINKED BREZHNEV'S REMARKS TO US STATEMENTS, ONE ASSERTING THAT "THE SOVIET STATEMENT IS A MORE DETAILED COPY OF THE AMERICAN PLAN AND THE TWO STATES ARE COMPETING FOR CONSOLIDATION OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF ARAB LANDS . . ." (AL-ANBA, MARCH 22); ANOTHER CHARGING THAT THE SOVIET UNION APPEARS TO BE "COMPETING WITH THE AMERICANS IN GRANTING GUARANTEES FOR ISRAEL" BECAUSE IT KNOWS THAT IT IS NOT AS GOOD A FRIEND TO THE ARABS AS THE US IS TO ISRAEL (AL RAI AL AM, MARCH 22); AND ANOTHER ALLEGING THAT THE USSR, ALONG WITH THE US AND THE "EUROPEANS," ARE DEMANDING CONCESSIONS FROM THE ARABS BUT NOT FROM ISRAEL. THE MOST BITTER ATTACK ON BREZHNEV CAME FROM AL-ANBA (MARCH 23), WHICH CLAIMED HE IGNORED THE PALESTINIANS, TRIED TO "PLEASE ISRAEL," AND "AGREES" WITH PRES CARTER ON LIMITATION OF ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE MIDDLE EAST, WHICH WOULD HURT THE ARABS BUT NOT ISRAEL, SINCE ISRAEL CAN MANUFACTURE MANY OF ITS OWN  
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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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